

JULY/AUGUST 2021 • VOLUME 16 ISSUE 4

COMMUNITY WELLNESS

5 TIPS FOR A BETTER NIGHT'S SLEEP

Sleep is a critical part of managing stress and making healthy choices. Get a restful night's sleep with these tips.

Sleep is a remarkably productive and critical part of life; it's the time when the brain and body recharge for another day. Yet, most of us simply aren't getting enough sleep. Stress, everyday demands and — yes, your smartphone — are likely culprits negatively impacting your sleep. Either too little or too much sleep can make it tough to function at your best.

Sleep better and wake up feeling more rested with this advice.

- Eat meals (especially dinner) at the same time each day and at least two to three hours before bedtime.
- Limit naps to 30 minutes at least six to eight hours before bedtime.
- Stay active. Any activity is good. For best results, get moving 20 to 30 minutes most days, at least four to six hours before bedtime.
- Limit your caffeine intake and avoid it after noon. Also avoid stimulants such as decongestants and nicotine.

- Go to bed at the same time every night and get up about the same time every morning — even on weekends.

A healthy amount of sleep for most adults is seven to eight hours a night. If self-care techniques don't help, talk to your health care provider. Sleep problems are treatable.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Silent Health Crisis • P. 2

But Really— How are You?
• P. 3

Getting Mental Health
Literate • P. 5

Mental Health First Aid
Flyer • P. 6

Recipe • P. 7

Overcoming Burnout • P. 8

LGBTQIA+ Minority Stress
& Behavioral Health • P. 9

Infant Mental Health • P. 10

Beat Boredom with These
Fitness Tips • P. 11

What About the Youth?
• P. 12

Available Programs • P. 13

A SILENT HEALTH CRISIS

LESLENE E. GORDON, PHD, RD, LD/N
COMMUNITY HEALTH DIRECTOR

When a prominent public personality spoke about standing by her man a number of years ago, she was the target of significant public and private ridicule. However, considering the current health status of U.S. men it may well be the time for more of us to make a public commitment to stand by our men whether they be fathers, husbands, sons or other relatives and friends.

Data indicates that an increased risk of death and disease is associated with being male. Compared to women, men die younger, continue to suffer from preventable diseases and experience poor health outcomes needlessly. Further, they outnumber women in deaths due to violence and occupational accidents. They are also less likely to visit a physician or respond to health promotion / disease prevention messages. Men have been described as being, “out of sync with the health care system and out of sync with their own bodies”. There are enormous costs that are associated with their premature deaths and disabilities that impact families, employers and society as a whole. The cost of medical expenses is clearly a concern but the emotional and spiritual losses are as they would say “priceless”.

Because a higher percentage of men do not have medical coverage, efforts to improve their status must include attention to economic and access issues. We must also work to change the world view of men in our society as it relates to health. The stoic attitude to pain and discomfort required for men is seen as a barrier by some experts and changes in these gender related norms will be difficult. Difficult for men and for women too, how often have we as mothers discouraged our sons from crying simply because they are boys and not girls? Regrettably that translates into adult men who feel they must tolerate various discomforts like a man. My intent is not to be overly simplistic on this issue, as in the case of other health disparities the causes and concerns are complex. My hope is to raise awareness on what as been referred to as a “silent health crisis”. We need to be sensitive to the need to respond personally and professionally to the continuing poor health status of men in our communities. Additionally, we need to consider approaches that will engage men in health prevention efforts that are targeted at them so that they can be active and informed participants in protecting their health. On the more creative side, maybe we should have a, “Take Your Man to the Doctor Day”, during National Men’s Health Month each June... maybe next year?

Have a question or comment? Email us: DLCHD29WebsiteDistribution@flhealth.gov

Managing Editor: Marina B. Martinez Rivera

Layout Editor: Krystal Snell

Copy Editors: Tara Spiller, Kelsey Christian, Jennifer Waskovich, Mandy Chan

BUT REALLY– HOW ARE YOU DOING?

TRANSITIONING BACK TO THE WORKPLACE

By Marina B. Martinez-Rivera, BPH, BS, CPH-Provisional

In May, Governor DeSantis lifted the state's COVID-19 restrictions, marking the commencement of reintegrating back into the workplace for those working remotely from home. For some of us, the return to the workplace is a sign to a return to any sense of 'normalcy' and is met with excitement in finally returning to our past routines. For others, however, as we each were dealt with our own experiences and trauma brought on by the pandemic, the transition back into the workplace may be a point of stress and anxiety as we face with much uncertainty as to what the future in the workplace holds for all of us. Some of us may be dealing with anxiety stemming from safety and social interaction concerns.¹ For the past year, our homes were a safe haven in our individual efforts to protect ourselves from this new public health threat. We exchanged conference room meetings and handshakes with TEAMS meetings and elbow touching. It goes without saying that this past year and a half significantly changed how we socialize and engage with one another. These drastic behavioral changes that we adjusted to are now slowly beginning to integrate to what used to be our 'business as usual'.

Despite the call to return to the workplace, we cannot ignore the fact that the workforce has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic and its effect will continue to linger long after it is over through our behavioral health and well-being.² The pandemic has had the most impact on our routines and social connections, two major aspects that ground our overall well-being and allows us to overcome daily stressors and adversity. However, with routines thrown into a loop, the boundaries between work and home becoming murky, and the call to action for all of us to physically distance and stay home has impacted and set a new precedent for our behavioral health for years to come.² The American Psychological Association (APA) identified unhealthy coping such as disrupted sleep, increased substance use, and lower physical activity during the pandemic. The prolonged experience of limited social interaction, fear and isolation brought on by staying home, as well as the constant ups and downs brought on by the tumultuous US political and social climate throughout 2020 impacted the prevalence of behavioral disorders.^{3,4} Rates of depression, anxiety, substance use, and suicidal ideation have all increased in the past year.² APA data suggest that young women, people with young children, or persons with previously diagnosed psychiatric disorder are at higher risk of mental-health problems.⁴ According to the Mental Health Index: U.S Worker Edition, the risk of PTSD is 46% higher than before the pandemic, women are showing increased anxiety, stress, and depressed mood, and a 40% increase in feelings of anxiety and worry among 40-59 year old employees has been reported.⁵ The increased prevalence of behavioral disorder and the increased negative impact on our mental well-being may implicate work productivity, motivation, and how we perceive ourselves as employees- especially as we transition back into the workplace.

Two-thirds of American workers are somewhat or extremely anxious about returning to work.⁵ Although there has been an increased sense of support for our mental well-being this past year, more than 4 in 10 employees still do not feel comfortable sharing on their behavioral health due to fear of retaliation by employers for taking time off for their mental health.³ As we transition back into the workplace, what can we do individually and collectively to make this transition back as smooth as possible for our behavioral well-being?

1. Walkthrough and do a dry run of your prospective work routine.

Something one can do to ease anxieties on returning to work is to begin establishing a work routine and engaging in a 'dry run' or walkthrough of what the day at the workplace would be like.^{1,6} Start waking up at the time you expect to wake up and run through what it would be like engaging with colleagues individually or in a group setting. Beginning to reestablish better sleep hygiene may also benefit you in returning into the groove of things.¹

2. Update and refresh aspects of your workspace and appearance.

If you have an opportunity to return to your workplace before the first day back, tidy up the workspace, add some plants, and adjust the lighting and room so it is a comfortable and safe place to work in. You could also refresh your wardrobe as it may help boost confidence and heighten our sense of professionalism- especially if one has experienced weight gain or weight loss from the past year.¹ (*Continued on pg. 4*).

3. Assert your boundaries and find flexibility in your work.

Within the workplace, it would be difficult to know who in the team has been vaccinated and who has not been engaging in social distancing, which can be a point of stress for some employees who may live with children who have not gotten the vaccine yet or living with immunocompromised aging adults. If these are points of anxiety for you, do your best to assert your boundaries in the workplace, such as still wearing a face mask or engaging in physical distancing. If your employer allows you to have a hybrid work model, such as a day or two in telework, then by all means use that to your advantage during the transition back.^{1,6} If your team is willing to make changes that assist in reintegrating back into the workflow, perhaps avoid scheduling internal meetings between 12pm on Fridays and 12pm on Mondays, so that everyone gets a break on the weekends.⁷

4. Be empathetic to one another.

No two employees' schedules or situations are the same, so it is imperative that leadership and every single individual in the workforce be empathetic to each individual's own circumstances.^{2,6,7} For so long we have been isolated in our feelings and emotions. Reaching out to our colleagues and having frank conversations can help us progress in re-integrating into the workplace smoothly. If you feel your behavioral well-being is impacting your productivity and motivation at work, reach out to your supervisor and engage in a candid conversation with them. Supervisors and management alike, be willing to listen empathetically to your colleagues and employees if they reach out to you.²

5. Access employee behavioral health resources.

If your workplace has access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), it should be used as needed as these tools are meant to aid us, not hinder or stigmatize. Seek out a behavioral health professional through your health insurance provider if possible. Managers and leadership should push to normalize the use of these services and reassure that there will be no penalty for taking care of oneself.⁷

We are all eager to get back into the workplace- but we cannot set up shop immediately without trying to unpack what we all experienced individually and collectively. We must acknowledge that the workers that left the workplace back in March 2020 are coming back as different individuals, each with their own trauma and weight of the COVID-19 pandemic that has impacted their behavioral and overall well-being. Not only do we need to recognize and acknowledge this, but we must provide a space for employees and colleagues to share on their experiences. The impact of COVID-19 on our behavioral health will be felt for years to come, so the best thing we can do to support one another is to be flexible, be empathetic, and be kind- but most importantly, be kind to yourself.

"For additional resources on returning to the workplace, APA Foundation's Center for Workplace Mental Health provides tools, resources and information, and has recently issued toolkits and webinars on COVID-19, remote work, and more. The Center recently released NOTICE. TALK. ACT.® at Work, an e-learning training for managers on supporting employees' mental health needs."³

References

1. <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/returning-to-work-soon-here-are-some-ways-to-make-the-process-easier/>
2. <https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2021/05/06/612870.htm>
3. <https://www.psychiatry.org/newsroom/news-releases/as-americans-begin-to-return-to-the-office-views-on-workplace-mental-health-are-mixed> APA
4. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-00175-z>
5. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/according-to-the-mental-health-index-everyones-mental-health-is-worsening-as-return-to-the-workplace-looms-large-301295566.html>
6. <https://www.wxyz.com/rebound/mental-health-tips-for-employees-who-are-returning-to-the-workplace>
7. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbooksauthors/2021/05/11/manage-employee-mental-health-in-a-post-covid-world/?sh=58fae8d11d06>

GETTING MENTAL HEALTH LITERATE

By Nicole M. Sutton, MPH, CPH, CHES

Mental health literacy is a term we rarely hear, yet it is key to helping us identify when someone may be experiencing mental health challenges that require support. Getting early support is critical to reducing possible longer-term effects of mental health challenges including impacts on employment and education, ability to maintain income and stable housing, difficulty with family relationships, and increased chances of experiencing a chronic illness like heart disease or diabetes.

Mental health literacy is also important in reducing stigma or embarrassment that can become a barrier in people seeking mental health support when needed. When people feel comfortable and supported in seeking care, they are much more likely to do so early.

What is mental health literacy?

First, it's about understanding how to have and maintain good mental health. When we are aware of the things that help support good mental health like getting enough rest, eating healthy foods, monitoring our stress level, and controlling our use of alcohol or other substances, then we are able to recognize the presence or absence of these factors in other's lives, as well as our own. Doing so helps empower us to take action and responsibility for maintaining good mental health.

Second, mental health literacy is having some understanding of mental disorders and how they are treated. For example, when we know the symptoms of depression, we may be able to recognize that seeing a mental health professional might be one of the options for treatment. Strong mental health literacy in individuals can help us identify when someone may benefit from behavioral health support. It can also help us know where and how to find services for ourselves or others. The sooner someone is able to access care, is important to better outcomes.

Next, because our ideas about mental health come from our lived experiences including our cultural identity, religious beliefs, and even generational norms, mental health literacy helps us understand some of the barriers individuals may be experiencing in making the decision to seek out mental health support. When we understand these aspects, we are better equipped to provide support and reassurance to someone experiencing mental health challenges.

Lastly, mental health literacy is about the confidence to act. That means taking the skills and knowledge we have about mental health and feeling empowered to support someone in need or even seek care for ourselves. Having that confidence is the difference between knowing and actually doing something that could have significant impact in someone's life.

How do I improve my mental health literacy?

Some of the ways to increase our own mental health literacy is through reading on the topic, as well as focusing on wellness. Also, there are opportunities to volunteer and receive training through peer support groups. Another option is to earn certification in Mental Health First Aid. This training is meant for community members and provides a wealth of knowledge and practical skills to be a mental health champion for our families and communities.

Where can I find out more?

Check out National Alliance on Mental Illness Hillsborough (<https://namihillsborough.org/>) for more information about how you can gain skills and knowledge, as well as become more involved in promoting good mental health. If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health challenge, you can call or refer them to Crisis Center of Tampa Bay by dialing 2-1-1 from any phone. Should you or someone you know experience a medical emergency dial 9-1-1.





Sign-up at
[cftampabay.org/
mentalhealth/](https://cftampabay.org/mentalhealth/)

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

LEARNING TO IDENTIFY, UNDERSTAND AND RESPOND TO THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

THE INITIATIVE:

The Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, in partnership with Love IV Lawrence, St. Petersburg College, Humana, and the Louis de La Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, has launched the Mental Health First Aid Initiative to:

- Provide viable skills to address mental health challenges
- Raise awareness of the prevalence of mental health issues in the community
- Reduce the stigma

THE GOAL:

Train and empower 5,000 key personnel in nonprofits, faith communities and other community settings to identify, understand and respond to signs of addictions and mental illness within the next three years.

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

Mental Health First Aid (the CPR of mental health) is a national certification through the National Council for Mental Wellbeing that is proven effective. Peer-reviewed studies show that individuals trained in the program:

- Grow knowledge of signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental illnesses and addictions
- Can identify multiple types of professional and self-help resources for individuals with a mental illness or addiction
- Increase their confidence in and likelihood to help an individual in distress
- Show increased mental wellness themselves

WHY IS IT NEEDED?

Even before the pandemic and social unrest of 2020, we knew that mental illness was a serious issue in our community and all communities. Pre-2020 research shows that 1-in-6 adults in the U.S. experience a mental illness within a given year.

A study released by the CDC in August 2020 found that 40 percent of U.S. adults (2 in every 5) are struggling with at least one serious mental health issue during the pandemic.

Those experiencing mental health conditions can be further impacted by stigma, which is caused by fear and a lack of understanding. It can lead to harassment, bullying, violence and discrimination, which can cause isolation, shame, and prevention of treatment for those experiencing mental illness.

WHO CAN USE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

Anyone. Mental Health First Aid training is similar to CPR training. It helps people identify, understand and respond to someone who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.

HOW DO I BECOME A CERTIFIED MENTAL HEALTH FIRST-AIDER?

Mental Health First Aid certification is about an 8-hour training course. In the virtual training, participants complete a self-paced introduction to the material that takes about two hours. The real-time online instruction — with between 10 and 30 people in the course — takes five to six hours in one day.

WHAT DOES IT COST

The Community Foundation of Tampa Bay is providing the training to those who work in nonprofit organizations, faith communities and educational settings free of charge.

The general public or businesses may access the training for a fee of \$125 per person.

Support the Love IV Lawrence Fund here:
https://cftampabay.org/give_now/healing/



A close-up photograph of a dish featuring bright green zucchini noodles (zoodles) topped with several round, browned turkey meatballs. The meatballs are covered in a thick, vibrant red marinara sauce. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the food.

Zucchini Noodles and Turkey Meatballs

yield: 6 SERVINGS

prep time: 1 HOUR

cook time: 30 MINUTES

**total time:
1 HOUR 30 MINUTES**

ingredients

- 1 pound (3 medium-sized) zucchini, spiralized*
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 cups marinara sauce, homemade or store-bought
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

FOR THE MEATBALLS

- 1 1/2 pounds ground turkey
- 1/2 cup Panko
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 large egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

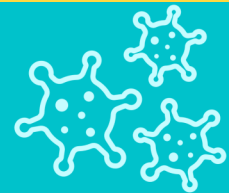
directions

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Lightly oil a 9×13 baking dish or coat with nonstick spray.
- In a large bowl, combine ground turkey, Panko, Parmesan, egg yolks, oregano, basil, parsley, garlic powder and red pepper flakes; season with salt and pepper, to taste. Using a wooden spoon or clean hands, stir until well combined. Roll the mixture into 1 1/2-to-2-inch meatballs, forming about 24 meatballs.
- Place meatballs onto the prepared baking dish and bake for 18-20 minutes, or until all sides are browned and meatballs are cooked through; set aside.
- Place zucchini in a colander over the sink. Add salt and gently toss to combine; let sit for 10 minutes.
- In a large pot of boiling water, cook zucchini for 30 seconds to 1 minute; drain well.
- Divide zucchini into meal prep containers. Top with meatballs, marinara sauce and Parmesan.



Overcoming Burnout

In a time of COVID-19



What is Burnout?

It is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It is a work related mental health issue that can spill over into every area of life and can cause long term changes to the body.^{2,3}



76% of healthcare workers reported being burned out, exhausted, and overwhelmed.- Mental Health America¹



The COVID-19 Pandemic took a toll on health professionals' behavioral health and mental well-being. It introduced **The Wellbeing-Engagement Paradox of 2020**. Engagement at work increased while well-being decreased. Reasons for this may be that initial productivity was incentivized by fear and anxiety, not well-being. As the pandemic continued, productivity and well-being began to decrease, causing burnout⁵

Signs and Symptoms³



Overwhelming Exhaustion



Feelings of Hopelessness, Cynicism and Detachment



Sense of Failure and Self-Doubt



Frequent Headaches and Muscle Pain



Withdrawing from Responsibilities



Using Food, Drugs, or Alcohol to cope

Re-framing Burnout⁴

- It is not so much the presence of huge negatives as the absence of positives.
- Rather than managing your time, focus on managing your energy.
- Rather than finding work-life balance, focus on finding work-life engagement.



Coping and Overcoming Burnout^{3,4}



1. Connect with Other People

Reach out to friends, family, and co-workers as well as make new connections.



2. Reframe How You Look at Work

Identify where you have value in your work, make friends in the work place, and take time off if needed.

1

2

3

3. Re-evaluate Your Priorities

Set boundaries, take breaks from technology, create something, as well as schedule relaxation time and plan vacations. What is important to you right now?



4. Make Physical Activity a Priority

Engage in exercise or mindful movement 30 minutes a day. A 10 minute walk can help relieve stress.



5. Establish a Healthy Diet to Support Energy Levels

Reduce sugar and carbs, cut back on caffeine and nicotine, and consume more fruits, vegetables, and water.

References:

1. <https://www.healthcareinanceneews.com/>
2. <https://www.lyrahealth.com/blog/recover-from-burnout/>
3. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/burnout-prevention-and-recovery.htm>
4. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brettsteenbarger/2020/09/29/a-unique-approach-to-overcoming-burnout/>
5. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nazbeheshti/2021/04/15/the-pandemic-has-created-a-new-kind-of-burnout-which-makes-well-being-more-critical-than-ever/>

LGBTQIA+ MINORITY STRESS & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

By Marina B. Martinez Rivera, BPH, BS, CPH-Provisional



LGBTQIA+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual/Agender. This acronym has evolved from its original LGB acronym to include other members of the queer community who stray from the cisgender and heteronormative. This group of individuals have a long history of experiencing stigma, prejudice, discrimination, and marginalization which all fuel into their experiences of minority stress. Such stressors include discrimination at work and in social spaces, discriminatory housing and health care services, heteronormative cultural norms, lack of political

representation, and fear or rejection from friends, family, and society.¹ LGBTQIA+ Research, advocacy, and education began in the 1980s and these efforts and initiatives have allowed for the identification of many objective and external stressors that are unique to this community.¹

What is Minority Stress?

Minority stress is different from general stress such that minority stress is unique, chronic, and socially based.² Minority Stress is the additional stress that members of marginalized groups experience due to discrimination and prejudice, and it is additive to general stress that most people experience. Minority stress theory implies that LGBTQIA+ members have a shared experience of distinct and chronic stressors that are directly related to their sexual orientation and identity.¹ LGBTQIA+ minority stress can be attributed to microaggressions that are experienced daily as well as covert and overt homophobia by society.³ Minority stress can include, but not limited to stress in relation to mentioning about one's spouse or partner to another person, anxiety of correcting someone on one's pronouns, and anxiety of being discriminated or being seen as less than in the work place.² LGBTQIA+ minorities, such as BIPOC and those living with a disability may face additional minority stress due to their identity in these additional minority groups.⁴

How does Minority Stress Impact Behavioral Health?

4.5% of the US population identify being a member of the LGBTQIA+ community and nearly 40% report having a mental illness in the past year.⁴ Minority stress has contributed and is directly linked to the higher rates of behavioral health issues and disorders among LGBTQIA+ members.^{1,4} The direct stigmatization, victimization, rejection, harassment, and oppression of this group have a significant impact on the behavioral health of this community.¹ Compared to their cis-gendered counterparts, LGBTQIA+ members have higher rates psychiatric disorders, like depression, anxiety, and PTSD, higher rates of substance use, alcohol use, suicidal ideation and suicide.^{1,3,4} 30.8% of Transgender individuals considered attempting suicide, compared to heterosexuals at 2.3%.⁵ Bisexual and transgender people have the highest rates of mental health concerns, such as higher rates of anxiety and depression compared to their other LGBTQIA+ members.^{4,5} LGBTQIA+ minority stress also impacts their access to behavioral health services and treatment. LGBTQIA+ are 2.5 times more likely to access mental health services than their cis-gendered counterparts, but yet discrimination, stigma, lack of cultural sensitivity, and reluctance to address sexuality by mental health care providers has delayed LGBTQIA+ members from seeking needed mental health care as well as impacted effectiveness of care.^{4,5} In a survey of LGBTQIA+ people, over 50% of respondents reported that health providers have refused care, used harsh language, and blamed patient's sexual orientation for cause of illness. Implicit preferences for heterosexual people among heterosexual care providers has also hindered LGBTQIA+ from seeking behavioral health care.⁴ (Continued on pg. 10).

The continued experience and impact of LGBTQIA+ minority stress is a significant barrier and challenge in adequately addressing LGBTQIA+ behavioral health. There is a need for behavioral health providers to improve their LGBTQIA+ cultural competency knowledge and skill to decrease health seeking hesitancy and improve trust and rapport with LGBTQIA+ behavioral health patients. Behavioral health professionals should seek an open attitude, self-awareness, and awareness of others to improve cultural competence. LGBTQIA+ centered behavioral health services and programs are also necessary agents that can help abridge the behavioral health disparities seen among this minority group and setting the bar for LGBTQIA+ cultural competence.

Resources for LGBTQIA+ Behavioral Health^{6,7}

If you or a loved one are experiencing behavioral health issues in relation to LGBTQIA+ minority stress, here is a list of resources and organizations that one can reach out to in Hillsborough County:

- Metro Inclusive Health
- The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay
- LGBT Welcome Center
- The GaYBOR District
- Equality Florida
- The Trevor Project
- Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) Tampa



References

1. <https://www.nata.org/blog/elizabeth-quinn/minority-stress-and-lgbtq-patients%E2%80%99-mental-health>
2. <https://www.urccp.org/article.cfm?ArticleNumber=69>
3. <https://www.bewellct.com/lgbtq-issues.php>
4. <https://www.mhanational.org/issues/lgbtq-communities-and-mental-health>
5. <https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Psychiatrists/Cultural-Competency/Mental-Health-Disparities/Mental-Health-Facts-for-LGBTQ.pdf>
6. <https://www.ut.edu/campus-life/leadership/engage/diversity-opportunities-/lgbtqi-resources>
7. https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/counseling-center/documents/lgbtq_resource_guide.pdf

Infant Mental Health: Understanding the Needs of Children from Zero to Three

By Nicole M. Sutton, Public Health Practitioner, Mom, Photographer, Health Justice Advocate

Babies and their mental health? Yes, it's a thing. The mental health of infants is just as important as their physical health, but it's only recently that we are starting to hear more regularly about its importance.

The first time I became aware of the term, I was holding my fifteen-month old son at 3am and googling "babies that don't sleep". Having tried every conceivable strategy to get my child to sleep recommended by family, friends, and even my child's health provider, I followed my instinct to investigate a little deeper.

Infant mental health looks at aspects of a child's development both socially and emotionally from their birth until age three. During this period of a child's life, their brain is developing very quick and trillions of cellular brain connections are being made. Those connections serve to support every dimension of their development including achieving age-related social, emotional, intellectual, and physical milestones. An infant's mental health influences all those areas of their growth.

At the heart of infant mental health is the connection a child develops with their main caregiver(s). Referred to as a secure attachment bond, this trusting connection provides a child with a sense of safety and understanding that is the foundation for the other areas of growth they are experiencing. Through this special bond, babies learn empathy, love, and confidence. A weak or insecure attachment can lead to future challenges with social and emotional health, relationships with others, difficulties with learning and school success, and even physical health. It's important to remember that with effort repairing an insecure attachment bond is possible and can strengthen a child's trust and sense of self, as well as build resilience they can rely on throughout their life.

For parents, understanding the importance and impact of mental health on an infant's progress in achieving their developmental milestones, we are able to identify a need for support. My child's issues with sleep were an important sign and learning about infant mental health was an important part of feeling empowered to address his needs. The sooner challenges are identified, the sooner a child can get care. And care early on makes all the difference.



To find out more about infant mental health, check out the Infant Mental Health Project with Early Childhood Council of Hillsborough County (<https://ecctampabay.org/infant-mental-health-project/>).

Beat Boredom with These Fitness Tips



Stuck in an exercise rut? These tips will get you excited to lace up your sneakers!

Even the most devoted exerciser can get tired of the same old, same old. Changing up your routine from time to time can keep you motivated. Remember to make it fun!

Try a new activity. You don't have to pound away on the treadmill to get a good workout. How about dancing? Have you tried activity-based video games, with or without your kids? Or what about biking, gardening or horseback riding? Use exercise as an opportunity to have new experiences.

Mix it up. You don't have to do the same thing every day. Pick several activities you enjoy. Mix and match. The important thing is to move. Tap into your interests to keep things fresh and stay motivated. Exercise should be something you look forward to — not dread!

Bump up your intensity. If you really don't enjoy long exercise sessions, then high-intensity interval training might be for you. With high-intensity interval training, you alternate between intense activity and low-to-moderate activity. Getting your heart rate to climb and then return back down over and over again can be an incredibly effective workout, even if you have less than 10 minutes to exercise. In fact, studies have shown you can get some of the same benefits from short intervals at a vigorous pace as you can from spending a longer time at a moderate intensity.

Here is an example of an interval workout: If you're on a stationary bike, for instance, you'd warm up for a few minutes, and then cycle at a moderate pace and moderate tension for, say, 90 seconds. At that point, you'd either crank up the tension or speed or both for 30 seconds and follow it up by returning to your moderate pace and tension. You'd repeat the cycle a few times and end with a cool-down.

WHAT ABOUT THE YOUTH?

AUGUST IS BACK TO SCHOOL MONTH!

ARE STUDENTS MENTALLY READY AFTER A YEAR OF HYBRID AND REMOTE LEARNING?

BY MARINA B. MARTINEZ RIVERA, BPH, BS, CPH-PROVISIONAL

9.3% OF FLORIDA YOUTHS REPORTED A SEVERE MAJOR DEPRESSIVE EPISODE IN THE PAST YEAR-126,000 INCREASE SINCE LAST YEAR.¹



ACCORDING TO THE CDC, 1 IN 4 YOUTHS CONSIDERED SUICIDE DURING THE PANDEMIC.²

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON YOUTHS' MENTAL HEALTH³⁻⁵

- TROUBLE CONCENTRATING AND PAYING ATTENTION
- SLEEP TROUBLES
- REPORT LOWER GRADES AND PROCRASTINATION
- STRUGGLING TO STAY MOTIVATED
- STRUGGLING TO STAY CONNECTED WITH OTHERS
- MISSING DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

MINORITY AND LOW SES STUDENTS MOST ADVERSELY IMPACTED

71% ETHNIC MINORITIES REPORTED LESS TIME OUTSIDE SINCE CORONAVIRUS COMPARED TO 57% OF WHITES.



INCREASED REPORTS IN...³⁻⁵



DEPRESSION

ANXIETY AND WORRY

EATING DISORDERS

SUBSTANCE USE- ESPECIALLY VAPING

HOW TO HELP YOUTH TRANSITION BACK TO SCHOOL?⁶⁻⁷

1. KNOW THE FACTS AND WHAT TO EXPECT

STAY UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST COVID-19 AND SCHOOL UPDATES. KEEP AN EYE WHEN VACCINES BECOME AVAILABLE FOR YOUR CHILD.

2. TALK OPENLY WITH YOUR KIDS

ENGAGE IN AN OPEN CONVERSATION WITH YOUR CHILD ON RETURNING TO SCHOOL. LISTEN EMPATHETICALLY TO THEIR CONCERNS AND WORRY AND TRY TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THEIR WORRIES.

3. ESTABLISH A SLEEP ROUTINE

GET YOUR CHILD TO START UNWINDING AND GOING TO BED AROUND THE TIME IF THEY WERE GOING TO SCHOOL THE NEXT MORNING. THIS CAN HELP REDUCE SLEEP TROUBLES ON THE DAY BEFORE THE FIRST DAY.

4. PROVIDE COPING STRATEGIES

HELP YOUR CHILD COPE THROUGH THE WORRY WITH TOOLS LIKE JOURNALING, EXERCISE, BREATHING TECHNIQUES, AND MUSIC.

5. REACH OUT TO YOUR PEDIATRICIAN

YOUR CHILD'S PEDIATRICIAN MAY HAVE RESOURCES AND CONNECTIONS THAT COULD SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE TRANSITION BACK TO SCHOOL.

REFERENCES

1. [HTTPS://MHANATIONAL.ORG/ISSUES/2021/MENTAL-HEALTH-AMERICA-PREVALENCE-DATA](https://mhanational.org/issues/2021/mental-health-america-prevalence-data)
2. [HTTPS://EDSOURCE.ORG/2021/SCHOOLS-ADD-MORE-COUNSELING-SERVICES-BUT-STUDENTS-MENTAL-HEALTH-IMPACTS-MAY-LINGER-FOR-YEARS/651272](https://edsources.org/2021/schools-add-more-counseling-services-but-students-mental-health-impacts-may-linger-for-years/651272)
3. [HTTPS://WWW.CPR.ORG/2021/04/05/ALL-KINDS-OF-TRAUMA-STUDENTS-ARE-RETURNING-TO-SCHOOL-BUT-ARE-WE-READY-TO-HELP-THEM-COPE/](https://www.cpr.org/2021/04/05/all-kinds-of-trauma-students-are-returning-to-school-but-are-we-ready-to-help-them-cope/)
4. [HTTPS://WWW.EDWEEK.ORG/LEADERSHIP/THE-PANDEMIC-WILL-AFFECT-STUDENTS-MENTAL-HEALTH-FOR-YEARS-TO-COME-HOW-SCHOOLS-CAN-HELP/2021/03](https://www.edweek.org/leadership/the-pandemic-will-affect-students-mental-health-for-years-to-come-how-schools-can-help/2021/03)
5. [HTTPS://WWW.SANDIEGOUNIONTRIBUNE.COM/POMERADO-NEWS/OPINION/EDITORIAL/BACK-TO-SCHOOL/STORY/2021-04-27/BACK-TO-SCHOOL-THE-EFFECTS-OF-THE-PANDEMIC-ON-OUR-CHILDREN](https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/pomerado-news/opinion/editorial/back-to-school/story/2021-04-27/back-to-school-the-effects-of-the-pandemic-on-our-children)
6. [HTTPS://WWW.MENTALHEALTH.ORG.UK/CORONAVIRUS/SCHOOL-GUIDANCE-FOR-COPING-WITH-CORONAVIRUS](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/school-guidance-for-coping-with-coronavirus)
7. [HTTPS://WWW.CEDARS-SINAI.ORG/BLOG/SCHOOL-ANXIETY.HTML](https://www.cedars-sinai.org/blog/school-anxiety.html)

GIFT @ Work

A Worksite Wellness Program

HOW IT WORKS



Increases In:

- Productivity
- Employee Morale
- Self-Esteem
- Overall Health Outcomes



Decreases In:

- Absenteeism
- Employee Turnover Rate
- Stress Levels
- Healthcare Costs



It is known that a productive company would not exist with unhealthy employees. Daily chores that we make can aid creating healthier, stronger, and happier versions of ourselves at work and at home. The Community Health Division within the Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County is offering any businesses a corporate wellness program to improve the overall health of their employees.

If your business is interested, please call **(813) 559-4152** and learn how you can get started!

**EVERY DOLLAR
INVESTED YIELDS \$6
IN HEALTH-RELATED
SAVINGS**



Interested in receiving a copy of the newsletter?!

The Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County's bi-monthly newsletter is available online at <http://hillsborough.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health-planning-statistics/community-wellness-newsletter/index.html>.

The newsletter can be printed and mailed to your address for your convenience.

To preserve your privacy, if you would like to be added to the email distribution list or receive a mailed copy, please call (813) 307-8071 or email to DLCHD29WebsiteDistribution@flhealth.gov.

Want to be a healthier you? We can help!

The Florida Department of Health has **FREE** health education programs.

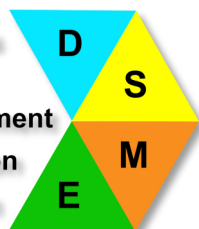
Call **813-307-8009** to register.

The logo for the 'BP For Me' program. It features the text 'BP F ME' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter 'F' is replaced by a red heart with a white ECG line running through it.

BP For Me

This 4 week program is designed for individuals who have high blood pressure and want to improve their heart health and reduce their risk for complications.

Diabetes
Self-
Management
Education
Program



Diabetes Self Management Education

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, learn how to better manage your condition in 7 weeks through reducing risks of complications, improving nutrition, increasing physical activity and self-monitoring, learning about medications, and practicing coping skills.



Diabetes Prevention Program

This program can help anyone who is overweight, pre-diabetic, or at risk for Type 2 diabetes. Participants will learn and practice skills on healthy eating, being active, and positive coping for a healthy lifestyle change.



Get Into Fitness Today

In a 6 week or 12 week program, participants learn about healthy eating, physical activity and ways to live a healthier life.



Get Into Fitness Together– a Learning Emotional Activity Program (GIFT-LEAP)

This program is designed to encourage children ages 5-9 to make healthy choices so that they can lead a healthy lifestyle into adulthood. The program is 6 weeks long and covers healthy eating, physical activity, and how to deal with stress and emotions. Families are welcome to join their 5-9 year-olds in the program!

BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER EARLY DETECTION PROGRAM

We offer **FREE** mammogram & pap smear testing!

For more information and to schedule an appointment, call **813-307-8082**.

Upcoming mobile mammography:

Tampa Family Health Center

To schedule an appointment, call Sophia at **813-284-4529**

Fl♥rida KidCare FLORIDA KIDCARE

The State of Florida health insurance for children (birth through age 18, even if one or both parents are working).

To apply by phone, call **1-888-540-5437**, or

TTY-877-316-8748.

To apply online, visit: www.floridakidcare.org.



FL HEALTH CHARTS

Have you ever wonder how healthy your community or state is? Or how your own health status compares to other Floridians? If so, Florida Health Charts is a great resource that paints an accurate picture of the health status of our state — with factual information.

The website continues to provide the most up-to-date health statistics you'll find in Florida. Be sure to bookmark the new site: www.FLHealthCHARTS.com.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation, and Conservation
www.hillsboroughcounty.org/

Plant City Parks and Recreation

<https://www.plantcitygov.com/parksrec>

Tampa Parks and Recreation

<https://www.tampagov.net/parks-and-recreation>

Temple Terrace Parks and Recreation

www.templeterrace.com/

Farmers Markets around Tampa Bay

<https://www.american towns.com/tampa-fl/local-food/>

CONTACT US

MAIN OPERATOR

& Director's Office 307-8000

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Community Health Director 307-8071

Epidemiology 307-8010

Health Education 307-8009

Breast/Cervical Cancer 307-8082

Diabetes 307-8071

Florida KidCare 307-8082

Weight Management 307-8071

Health Literacy 307-8071

Insulin Program 307-8082

Lead Poisoning Prevention 307-8071

School Health 307-8071

Sterilizations 307-8082

Office of Health Equity 307-8066

DISEASE CONTROL

HIV/AIDS Specialty Center.....307-8064

Immunizations.....307-8077

Sexually Transmitted Diseases.....307-8058

Anonymous Testing.....307-8058

Tuberculosis (TB).....307-8047

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH307-8059

HUMAN RESOURCES307-8031

NUTRITION/WIC307-8074

PHARMACY

(HIV/AIDS care clients only)307-8072

PUBLIC HEALTH

PREPAREDNESS307-8042

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER307-8044

VITAL STATISTICS

(birth & death records) 307-8002

* All numbers are area code (813) unless otherwise indicated.



Florida Department of Health
Hillsborough County
Health Education (70)
Post Office Box 5135
Tampa, Florida 33675-5135
813-307-8071

Hillsborough.flhealth.gov

MISSION: To protect, promote, and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, and community efforts.